

Building and Neighborhood History

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The Key:

**Square and lot (aka Legal definition)
found on maps**

Tax assessments are arranged by square and lot

Orient yourself--find yourself on a map.

Go to the earliest maps likely to show your building/neighborhood, starting with 1887.

Building research before 1887 (Capitol Hill, Georgetown) is tough and requires visiting other institutions, such as National Archives.

The plats will indicate structures--houses, schools, churches, public buildings.
Memorize your square and lot.

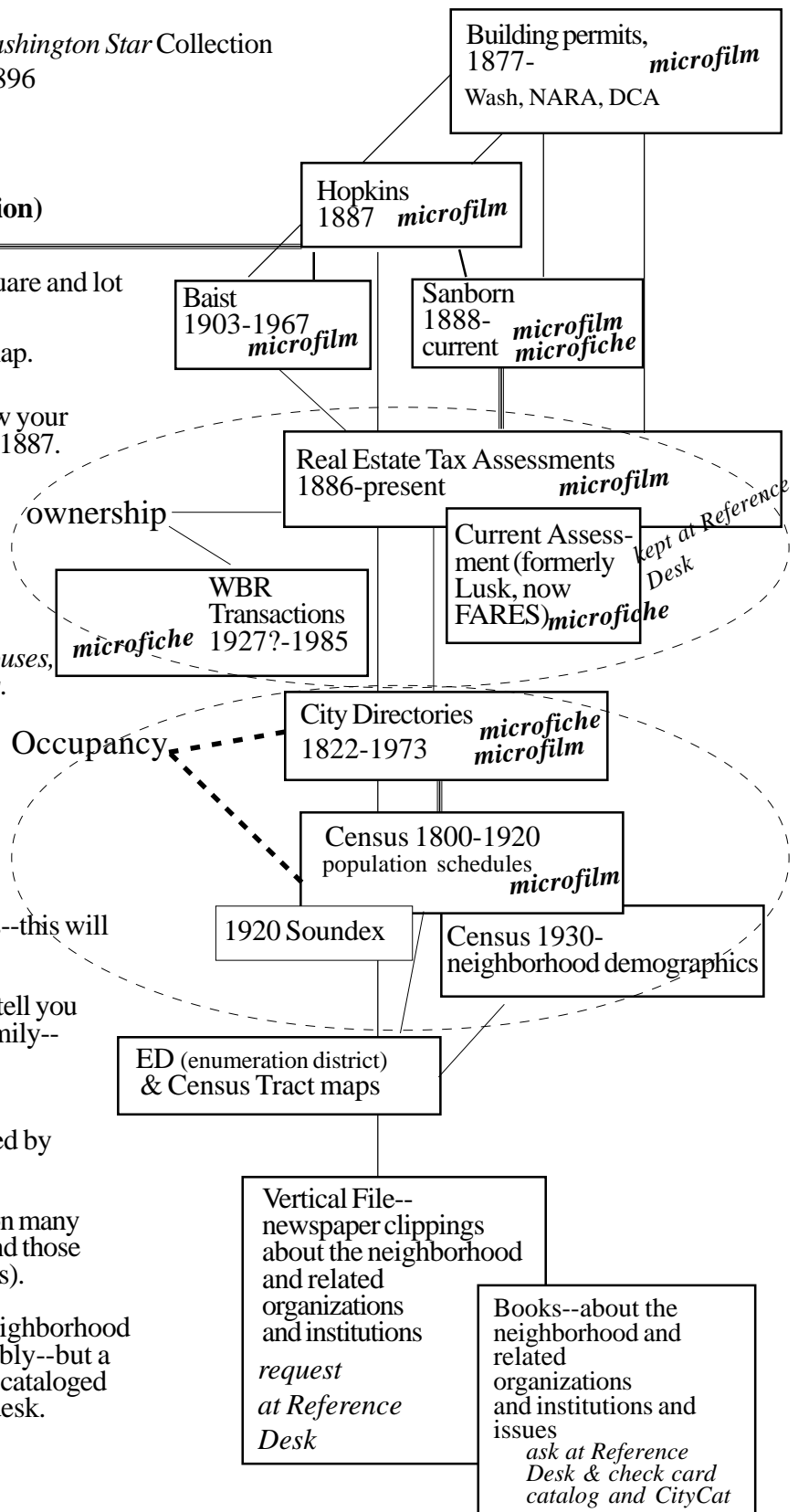
Then trace ownership using the real estate assessments and transaction microfiche.

Starting 1914 the city directory lists heads of household by street address--this will tell you who lived in the house.

Census schedules through 1920 will tell you more about a particular person or family--these are indexed 1800-1870, 1920 (soundex). Succeeding census statistics are divided by census tract--these can be determined by consulting the tract maps.

The Division maintains vertical files on many subjects, including neighborhoods and those institutions in them (churches, schools).

Few books are devoted strictly to neighborhood history--*Washington at Home*, notably--but a variety of other useful published and cataloged materials are listed at the reference desk.



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